

REMARKS

Claims 11-20 are pending in this application. As a result of claim additions, amendments and cancellations in this Response to Office Action, claims 11-20 will still be pending in this application.

In the Office Action, the drawings were objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(p)(4) and (5) for not including the reference numerals 17a and 17b mentioned in the specification and because reference numeral 11 is used to designate both the tangent plain and the boundary surface. Applicant respectfully submits that the proposed drawing corrections have removed the grounds for the objections. In Figure 1, reference numerals 17a and 17b have been added, and in Figure 2 reference numeral 11' has been added to denote the boundary surface. Withdrawal of the objection to the drawings is respectfully requested.

In addition, claims 11-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 6,052,870 to Hagenlocher et al. According to the Examiner, Hagenlocher shows a supporting arm (4) that is articulated to a door and to a door pillar by two gudgeons, and a control rod (9) that is articulated to the door and to the door pillar and is coupled to a bearing plate to which a corresponding gudgeon (7) of the supporting arm is also coupled. The Examiner states that Hagenlocher in Figure 7 shows a hinge part (P) attached to a hinge (10) at the remote end of the control arm (9) that is capable of being displaced relative to a corresponding hinge part (11) attached to a gudgeon (7) of the supporting arm (4). The Examiner asserts that hinge parts displaceable relative to each other (P, 11) are capable of being fastened by screws to the door via the door bracket (5), with hinge part (P) being displaceable by slots that are oriented in the direction of the control arm and an x-axis. The Examiner concludes that, although Hagenlocher does not show that the slots are on the hinge part (P) (they are on the control arm (9)), this is a mere reversal of components without significance, and it would have been obvious to make the door coupling of Hagenlocher with the slots on the hinge part (P) instead of the control arm (9) for the purpose of allowing the hinge part (P) to be adjusted relative to the control arm (9) and the corresponding hinge part (11).

Applicant traverses the Examiner's rejections. Hagenlocher shows a door coupling for a door of a vehicle, comprising a four-joint mechanism having a supported arm 4 and a control arm 9, wherein the supporting arm 4 is coupled to the door attachment part 5 (bearing plate) via two gudgeons 8 and to the door pillar attachment part 6 (hinge part) via two gudgeons 7, each of which four gudgeons is arranged at an end region of the supporting arm 4. The control rod 9 is coupled to the same door attachment part 5 (bearing plate) via a gudgeon 10 and to the same door pillar attachment part 6 (hinge part) as the supporting arm 4 via another gudgeon 10.

Applicant points out to the Examiner that Hagenlocher does not show a control rod of single piece design as stated in amended claim 11. Further, the control rod according to Hagenlocher is attached to the same door pillar attachment part 6 (hinge part) as is supporting arm 4, while amended claim 11 provides that the "hinge part" to which the control rod is coupled can be displaced relative to the "hinge part" assigned to the supporting arm (staying in its place).

The Examiner considers that one of the parts 9, P could be considered as the (single piece) control rod, and the other of the parts 9, P could be defined as a "hinge part", where due to the screws B in the slots S the hinge part would be displaceable in the direction of the control rod. However, even if one would understand the claim as suggested by the Examiner, the displacement movement of the "hinge part" as shown in Hagenlocher would in no case be relative to the hinge part assigned to the supporting arm, but rather always together with said hinge part 6 assigned to the supporting arm, since the other of parts 9, P defined as a "hinge part" is coupled to the same hinge part 6 as supporting arm 4. It must further be noted that, if one would try to achieve an adjustment of the control rod in Hagenlocher, only a spreading of the attachment surfaces of attachment parts 5, 6 would be achieved, due to the fact that both the supporting arm and the control rod are attached to gudgeons of the same attachment parts. By contrast, according to the invention, the vehicle door can be displaced around a vertical axis (see page 13 of the description).

In order to more particularly define the subject matter of the invention, Applicant has amended claim 11 of the application. Applicant submits that amended claims 11-13 are no longer obvious over Hagenlocher, and Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

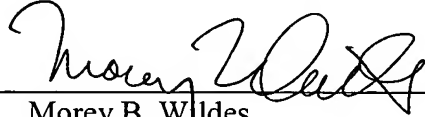
The Examiner indicated that claims 14-20 were drawn to allowable subject matter, for which Applicant thanks the Examiner. Because claims 14-20 depend from amended claim 11, and therefore include all of the limitations of claim 11 which Applicant believes is patentable, Applicant submits that claims 14-20 are now also in condition for allowance.

Conclusion

Reconsideration of the present application, as amended, is requested. If, upon review, the Examiner is unable to issue an immediate Notice of Allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone Applicant's undersigned attorney in order to resolve any outstanding issues and advance the prosecution of the case.

An early and favorable action on the merits is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,
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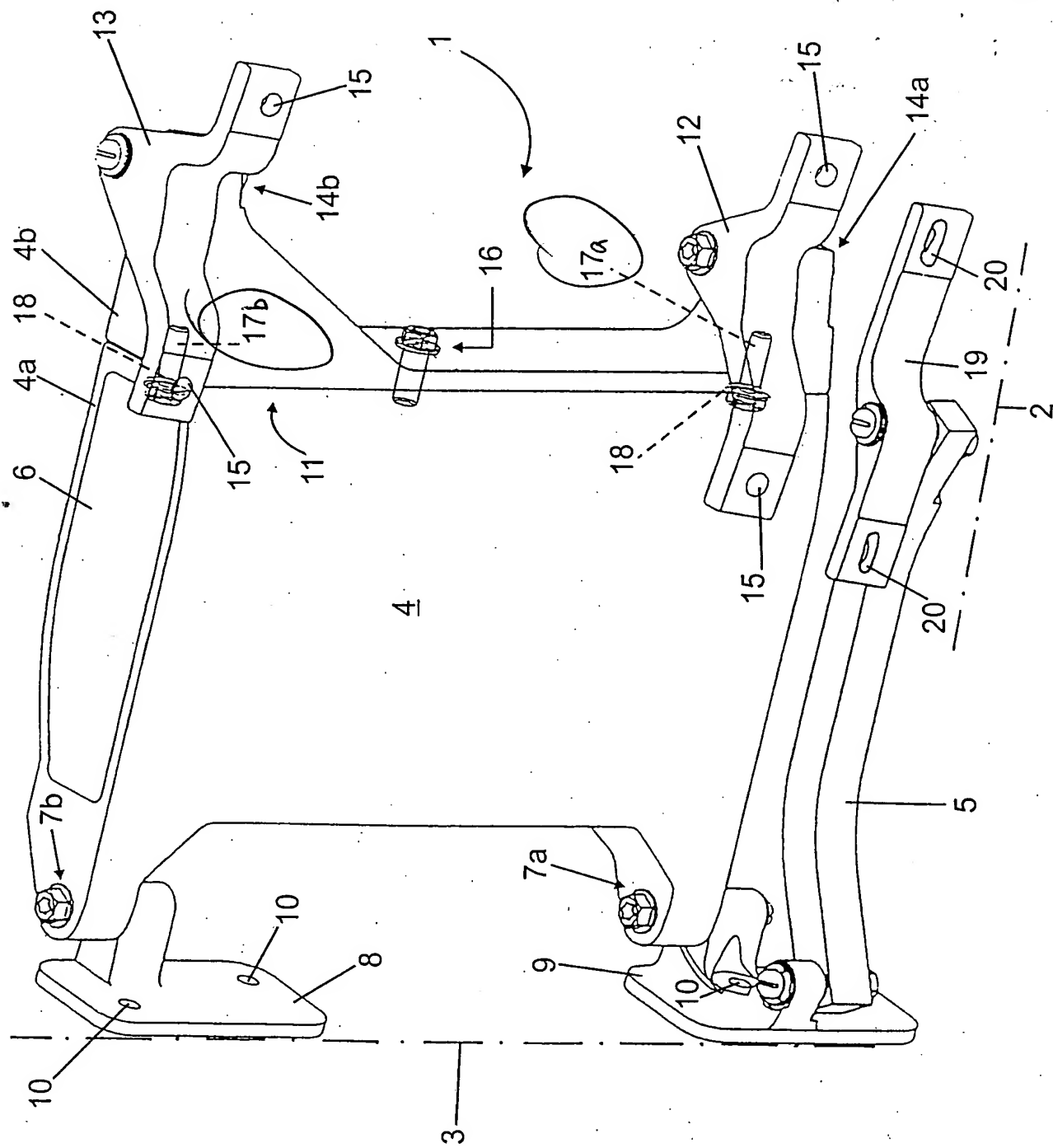


Fig. 1

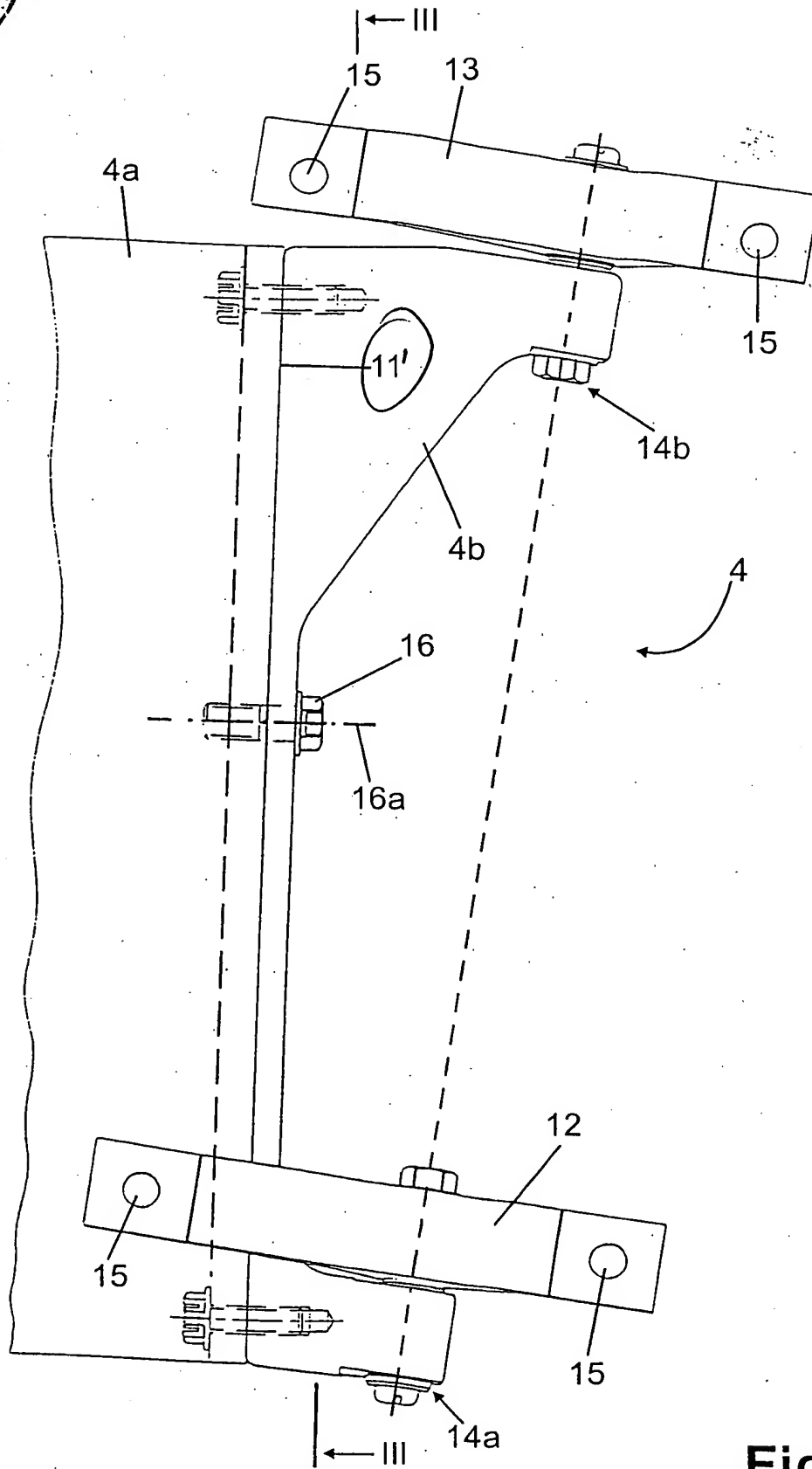


Fig. 2